

NRL's Matthew Lodge can't afford damages over New York home invasion

Former Australian rugby league player Matthew Lodge says he can't afford to pay damages after he went on a violent rampage in a New York couple's apartment, a court has heard. Lodge, a former Wests Tigers [NRL](#) prop, called a law firm in Manhattan two weeks ago to say he did not have a lawyer and could not afford the damages ahead of a court hearing in New York on Thursday. The disgraced NRL player's victims recalled in court for the first time the horror they endured when Lodge broke into their apartment and went on a rampage in front of their nine-year-old son on October 16. Scroll down for video



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CCTV footage has emerged of the moment rugby league player Matthew Lodge attacked Joseph Cartright in the foyer of his New York apartment building during a violent home invasion in October 2015

Joseph Cartright, Ruth Fowler and a third victim, German citizen Carolina Dekeyser, have filed a \$US2 million-plus civil lawsuit against Lodge in the US District Court in Manhattan. CCTV footage has emerged of the moment Lodge attacked Mr Cartright in the foyer of the apartment building. Mr Cartright told a hearing on Thursday the massively built Lodge threatened to kill him. 'The first thing he said to me was, 'This is the night you are going to die', ' Mr Cartright told Judge Ronald Ellis. Later Mr Cartright said Lodge savagely beat him.



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Three of Lodge's victims have filed a \$US2 million-plus civil lawsuit against Lodge in the US District Court in Manhattan. He has pleaded guilty to a separate criminal charge and will be sentenced in December



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Lawyer of couple attacked by Matthew Lodge discusses case

Loaded: 0%Progress: 0%0:00PlayMuteFullscreenNeed Text'He

had me in a headlock and threw me across the foyer as if I was a ball,' Mr Cartright said. Mr Cartright and Ms Fowler had never met Lodge, who had accosted Ms Dekeyser and her friend outside at a taxi and followed them to the building at about 4am.



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Joseph Cartright, Ruth Fowler and a third victim, German citizen Carolina Dekeyser (pictured), have filed a \$US2 million-plus civil lawsuit against Lodge in the US District Court in Manhattan

The hearing was held without Lodge in court or a lawyer to defend the rugby league forward. The court was told Lodge, who is believed to be in Australia, had failed to respond to the lawsuit since it was filed last December. The victims' lawyer Renan Varghese said Lodge did call their office two weeks ago to say he did not have a lawyer, was not working and did not have money to pay a judgment. 'Whether or not he can pay the judgment, I will enter a judgment,' Judge Ellis told the court. Lodge has entered a guilty plea to a separate

criminal misdemeanor reckless assault charge and will be sentenced in December. Mr Cartright and Ms Fowler described to Judge Ellis the financial and emotional distress Lodge, a 21-year-old, 193cm tall, 110kg prop forward, had caused their family. Their young son, who hid behind a bed and in a bathroom during the incident, has had to have therapy, has trouble sleeping and suffers night terrors. Mr Cartright testified how the incident began at 4am when he answered a call on his apartment's intercom from Ms Dekeyser and a friend who were desperately trying to get into the building. Mr Cartright said he went to the foyer and let them in, but Lodge, who he did not see, burst through the door. Lodge forced his way into Mr Cartright's apartment where Ms Fowler and his son were in separate bedrooms.



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Lodge forced his way into this apartment building in New York on October 15, 2015

'This guy was massive,' Mr Cartright said. Lodge locked Mr Cartright outside and while inside the unit did about \$US4,500 (\$A5,987) damage to furniture and smashed other items, including plates. He threw a wine bottle at NYPD officers when they arrived, which terrified Mr Cartright because he thought the police, who drew their guns, would shoot Lodge in front of his son. Judge Ellis said he would give Lodge thirty days to respond to the proceedings. Wests Tigers sacked Lodge shortly after the New York incident, but he is reportedly hoping to return to the NRL. Mr Varghese said his clients intend to pursue any judgment against Lodge in Australia.